



September 2022

Wyoming Judicial Branch

Efiling Report

A priority and major focus of the Judicial Branch has been to implement eFiling initially in the district courts, with an eye toward deploying eFiling in all trial courts over the coming years. The Judiciary is pleased to report eFiling has been implemented in the first district court.

District Court eFiling Rollout

eFiling has been available in chancery court since its opening in December 2021. The first district court went live on the system in late August. Albany County District Court is the pilot court for eFiling, and attorneys practicing in that court now have the opportunity to eFile documents.

The implementation of eFiling in the district courts will be staggered, meaning that not all courts will have eFiling available at the same time. This approach is necessary for a few reasons. First, there must be a reliable case management system in place to ensure the success of eFiling. The Judiciary is in the process of implementing that system. Second, Court Administration provides the training and support for some pieces of eFiling. With the limited staff available, a statewide rollout would be unwise and untenable. Third, as it has been found with other court automation systems, it is imperative that eFiling be piloted to ensure its integrity before it is fully rolled out to the rest of the state. If all goes according to plan, attorneys will be able to eFile in four district courts by the end of 2022 with all courts live on the system by the end of 2024.

System Overview

To work in the manner attorneys expect, eFiling is not a stand-alone system. Its functionality is highly dependent on a reliable case management system to provide the foundation and information needed to operate.

The Judicial Branch began the implementation of a uniform case management system in the district courts in 2009. At that time, the individual clerks of district court utilized four different electronic case

management systems. The uniform case management system, WyUser, was piloted in three courts in 2012, and was fully rolled out by 2014. The shift to WyUser was critical to accomplish the goal of getting all district courts on the same system. However, WyUser could not adequately support eFiling.

In 2016, the Supreme Court entered into contracts to provide an updated case management system to the district courts, Full Court Enterprise. Court Administration has worked through an intensive process with various committees since January 2017 to tailor this off-the-shelf system for the needs of Wyoming. Rollout of that system began in July 2021. Twelve courts will be live on the new system by the end of the year.

In June of 2019, the eFiling project was put out for a request for quotation. Four vendors responded, and three were selected to provide demonstrations of their systems. Chief Justice Michael K. Davis created an ad hoc eFiling Committee to help with vendor selection. The eFiling Committee consists of a cross-section of users of the eFiling system, including the Chief Justice, a district court judge, attorneys from a broad array of practices, clerks of district court, a district court judicial assistant, and a court reporter.

The Committee spent days sifting through vendor demonstrations, testing the various systems, and having frank discussions regarding the selection. The Committee recommended File & ServeXpress as the eFiling vendor in Wyoming. That decision was ultimately approved by the Wyoming Supreme Court. Contract negotiations with the vendor began in the summer of 2020, and contracts were executed by the end of that year.

The eFiling Committee has also devoted many hours over the last year creating Rules for Electronic Filing and Service in District Courts (eFiling Rules), which can be accessed here:

<https://www.courts.state.wy.us/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Order-Adopting-the-Wyoming-Rules-for-Electronic-Filing-and-Service-in-District-Court.pdf>. The Committee met monthly to help create and

refine the rules that will govern eFiling in the Wyoming district courts. The rules were distributed to the Bar for comment in early February. After reviewing those comments and making tweaks to the Rules, the Committee recommended adoption by the Supreme Court. The rules were adopted by the Court on June 28, 2022 and became effective on August 29, 2022.

The process has been challenging at times, but Wyoming district courts will all have the same updated case management system, and offer eFiling to the citizens of Wyoming in all district courts, by 2025. The systems will provide increased convenience for users, and greater efficiency for the courts.

Circuit Courts

During the 2022 legislative session, funding was appropriated for eFiling in the circuit courts. Court Administration is currently working on contracts to implement the eFiling system selected by the eFiling Committee in the circuit courts. When that is complete, work will begin to configure the system for circuit courts and eventually begin the process of implementing eFiling in the circuit courts of Wyoming increasing access to all jurisdictional levels of the courts.